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supervised and employed, thereby increasing their efficiency and bettering the social fabric on the whole.

Has not the time come for us to cease condemning short-term schools and the untrained nurse? Are they not all expressions of willingness to serve! Rather let us bend our energies to taking them under our care—the highly educated teacher of nurses in her sphere, the social service or health nurse in her field, the private or sick nurse, the assistant or attendant, each one graded according to her ability, even to the mother's helper, a woman trained to care for the home and keep the family together during the mother's illness. If the nursing college is the solution of this problem, then let us no longer listen to our leaders pleading for them but rather let us urge them forward and pledge to help them.

Seeing the needs of the Metropolitan Service and the lack of support given it I resigned from the school work to enter this field. During the year we cared for 620 cases, making 4784 visits, and giving special nursing service in thirty-nine cases. Mere figures can give us no idea of the educational and social value of this work.

Other activities were a class in home nursing in the Woman's Club, we holding our lectures and classes in Silliman Hall, Union College, a class for Italian Mothers who were instructed in the hygiene of childhood, also classes at the Young Woman's Christian Association, and during the summer a Little Mothers' League. In small cities we do not lack opportunities; our great need is for nurses educated for this field.

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## INSOMNIA

By ANNE E. PERKINS, M.D.

IN this age of tension and high pressure one hears so much of sleeplessness that it behooves us to consider some of its causes and remedies.

Over and over again I hear people say, in a matter of course tone, that they take veronal or trional or sulphonal powders to make them sleep, or that they are so nervous that they must take some bromide or a sedative tablet,—this as casually as if it were a drink of water. Once the habit is begun, it is most difficult to break off. A surprisingly large number become addicted to the use of hypnotics. If they do not go to sleep readily, there is a convenient powder at hand, and they are

impatient and think "What's the use—I shan't go to sleep to-night if I don't take something," and down goes the powder! They have no idea of the real nature of the drug taken, or its action on the brain-cells and depression of the heart and whole system. Most of us have a bad habit of taking to bed with us the events and worries of the day past and of that to come, living them over, or planning for the next day's work. The mind teems with thoughts of what we must do "the first thing in the morning." The entire day is mapped out, with mental reservations not to forget this or that.

If we go to sleep with our heads full of the day's work or worry, sleep is restless and full of "occupation-dreams,"—consequently unrefreshing. It is a poor plan for the physician to think over his cases, the minister to write his sermon, or the housewife to dwell on her problems. Often, bedrooms are much too small, the best rooms are taken for use during the day and the bedroom may be a curtained alcove without sufficient air or light, or a room used during the day and too warm or containing stale, tobacco-laden air when bed-time comes.

In investigating insomnia and its causes, I always find out first if the sufferer sleeps with the window open or shut, with the temperature over 60°, with a light, if any of the day's clothing is kept on, if the bedding is too heavy, or so light that the feet are cold, if there are too many pillows; if bed-time comes too late or too early, at what time the last meal was taken and of what it generally consists, *i.e.*, if late indigestible dinners are eaten,—also how evenings are spent—if at a tense card-game with too much excitement, if coffee is taken at the last meal, if there is flatulent indigestion or constipation (both prominent causative factors), if the individual is too much in-doors and exercises too little. Any and all of these things are important and frequent causes.

Frequently it is largely a nervous fear or habit and one turns and tosses incessantly until the bed is in disorder, jumps up to get a book and read, or becomes very depressed and hopeless. Some fall asleep only to wake in a few hours, unable to go to sleep again, others lie awake until nearly time to get up before falling asleep at all.

They are so anxious to get to sleep, so apprehensive lest the day find them worn out and unfit for duty, that sleep is driven away. They consult their watches and see that it is 2 or 3 A.M. and they are still wide awake, or the striking of the clock appalls them with the lateness of the hour. Many lie tense, jaws shut tightly, hands fairly clenched,

unable to relax, and perhaps frantically count the classical sheep over the stile or try to repeat poetry or the prayer-book.

Sometimes a glass of hot milk or cocoa, with crackers, taken slowly at bed-time, is helpful. Warm baths soothe some (and wake others), massage, gymnastics, or a brisk walk out of doors before retiring. But one must not depend too much on these things—and the habit of getting up to smoke or read should not be too often indulged in. It is better to be indifferent to sleep—if conditions are right for it, not to worry, for the more one pursues it the more it eludes,—to remember that no one suffers half as much for the loss of it as is popularly supposed. If one can think—"Never mind, let it go, sleep will come, and if I don't sleep to-night I shall sleep all the better to-morrow night," and let the mind be calm and tranquil, sleep will come. Deep breathing persisted in often brings sleep.

Association tests are helpful. For instance, think of some word, and idly follow out the resulting train of thought. See what word or phrase or scene the first suggests to you and what that in turn brings to memory, and while we dwell on these, the anxious fear changes to dreamy reminiscences and the first thing one knows he is drifting softly to sleep. To illustrate,—ocean may suggest ship, and you recall your first ocean voyage,—the new and unbeholden seas, all the novelty of the trip, the dawns and sunsets, the people you met and any subsequent acquaintance, the dinners, dances, the foreign shores, Gibraltar, Capri, Azores, Naples. Any word may be taken and this test followed,—it is often interesting and surprising to see what will be suggested. June brings to mind roses, bobolinks, fields of billowing buttercups and daisies, buds, flowers, some poem, a pleasant trip, one can visualize a beautiful forest vista or country road.

Let us be able to say truly:

"I have so many joys. One joy of lovely sights  
That down my days defile and dream along my nights,  
My soul is like a room with mirrors all set round,  
When *Beauty*, once beheld, hath infinite rebound,"—

and sleeplessness will have no terrors for us.